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ABSTRACT

This paper examines leadership and its links to success in five urban schools in Melbourne (Australia), reflecting the view that the role of leaders and the process of leadership are significant contributing factors to the achievement of successful school improvement. The elementary and secondary schools studied offer a range of the characteristics associated with Australian urban schools. Interviews, observation, and examination of documents provided information about collaborative leadership in these schools. Collaborative elements explored were: (1) structural frame; (2) human resource frame; (3) political frame; and (4) symbolic frame. A synthesis of hypothesized causal links was developed outside the four frames to effect a distillation of causal links. Dominant factors that were apparent included the development of the educational potential of students and the professional development of teachers, as well as good organizational health and the institutionalization of vision. These four demonstrable factors that generate a collaborative culture of leadership are inextricably linked and dependent on each other. (Contains 102 references.) (SLD)

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COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP IN URBAN SCHOOLS OF MELBOURNE

Paper Presented

to the

International Congress of School Effectiveness and Improvement

Leeuwarden, Netherlands

by

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PURPOSE, SIGNIFICANCE AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

This paper examines leadership and its links to success in five urban schools in Melbourne, Australia, reflecting the view that the role of leaders and the process of leadership are significant contributing factors to the achievement of successful school improvement.

Melbourne is the capital city of the state of Victoria, situated on the south-eastern coast of the continent. It is a large, cosmopolitan city with a population of over three million people of diverse ethnic mix, With backgrounds ranging from Asian, Middle-Eastern to European, as well as Australian. Inner Melbourne suburbs are traditional stopping off points for new arrivals to the city. They are densely populated, and provide a mix of residential, commercial, entertainment and industrial districts. Melbourne celebrates its multicultural character with festivals, markets, restaurants and foods of every nationality. The urban areas of Melbourne are colourful places to live, and being in close proximity to the central business district, major public hospitals and the University of Melbourne, also attract numbers of students, professionals and academics as residents. The schools in inner city Melbourne reflect this population, and it is from this context that the research for this study is taken.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Since the early 1980s educators in Australia have been faced with continual, radical change in both their schools and the systems that support them. These changes have dominated the workplace. Moreover, the economic and political nature of many of these changes seems to be increasingly taking the reform agenda out of the hands of educators, leaving them with an abiding sense of unease and disorientation. As well, a multiplicity of complex educational demands are being placed at the feet of teachers and administrators. Some schools, such as those in the urban areas of Melbourne, are experiencing accelerated changes in the socio-cultural make-up of their student populations, an increasing array of educational expectations and, at the same time, school closures, amalgamations and restructuring at the school and system levels. Schools are in a constant state of reorganisation with the dismantling of centralised authorities, including support services and standard operational procedures and processes. Roles and responsibilities of school principals are being revised. Many schools are being closed down as part of the Victorian government's rationalisation policy. Others are being amalgamated. Many members of staff are being required to transfer to different schools, whilst others are taking financial "packages" and early retirement. As these factors converge and impact on those who work, or assist the work, in schools, a shifting context becomes the norm, displacing the once stable and secure basis of educational programs, structures and staffing.

In addition, urban schools are confronted with further responsibilities. Students in these schools often come from low socio-economic, non-English speaking backgrounds and have special social welfare and educational needs. Staffing arrangements must serve the specific needs of transient migrant groups and innovative curriculum provision is a necessity to target the requirements of an urban clientele.

Clearly, then, skilful and imaginative leadership is imperative to cope with such a context and to bring about success.

THE SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL SUCCESS

A dizzying array of interpretations of 'success' has been put forward in educational circles, peppered with terms such as 'efficiency', 'effectiveness', 'excellence', 'quality', 'standards', 'performance' and so on. Success has most often been equated with academic test scores, especially those of the 'basic' skills of numeracy and literacy, and, in Victoria, the Victorian Certificate of Education results which mark the end of a child's schooldays. Some will see success measured by the numbers of students who compete successfully in the workplace. Others will perceive it as a measure of the happiness and well-being of the person as a whole. Those in schools know that there is much in education that cannot be measured. Some of the most admirable learning is intangible and unquantifiable. However, whatever the definition one applies to success, it must include a set goal or objective, with the measure of 'success' being gauged against its achievement.

In the context of this thesis, 'success' is associated with effective school improvement. Wideen, in Fullan and Hargreaves (1992:123), indicates that understandings of what constitutes school success in school improvement are still in their infancy. Generally, however, success in school improvement is related to the organisational good health of a school with indicators of 'success' conceived of as 'performance indicators', which are linked to school outcomes, and 'may be utilised in making judgements about aspects of a program, a program as a whole or the school as a whole, including the extent to which matters of fundamental importance in the school charter have been addressed, policies have been implemented or the development plan has progressed' (Caldwell and Spinks, 1992:148). For the purposes of this study, the following indicators of success in schools were employed :

> Outstanding improvements in outcomes in recent years, in the program of the school as a whole or in one or more aspects of the program;
>
> Success in the introduction of new approaches to learning and teaching, or the organisation and support of learning and teaching;
>
> Success in addressing a particular problem or set of problems; or
>
> Sustained achievement over many years.

Five urban schools which exhibited one or more of the above achievements, were identified and agreed to take part in the study. They are as follows:

> Brunswick High School
> Brunswick Primary School
> Richmond Secondary College
> Sydney Road Community School
> Wales Street, Northcote Primary School

The schools were either nominated or self-nominated and offered a mix of elementary and secondary levels of schooling, as well as a range of characteristics associated with urban schools. These five inner city schools, their staff, their students and their parents, provided the context for this research and the source of its findings. Not all schools operated in all aspects, in ways that were fully collaborative. It is not to be implied, therefore, that all findings necessarily apply to all schools.

METHODOLOGY

A qualitative approach was seen as an appropriate means of investigation in order to provide rich descriptions and explanations of situational influences. This is a conscious move away from the positivist, reductionist approach of behaviourism to a more descriptive, naturalistic phenomenology of leaders in action. Qualitative research 'assumes that systematic inquiry must occur in a natural setting rather than an artificially constrained one such as an experiment' (Marshall and Rossman, 1989:10). Its purpose is to work from the setting in which the inquiry is being made so that the depth of complexities surrounding the topic of study can be uncovered and linked appropriately to the findings; that is, a holistic understanding can be gained. Qualitative research methodology also allows for insight from the subject's view of what is being studied, not simply from the researcher's. This brings authenticity, as well as the possibility of broadening the hypothesised parameters. The 'naturalistic' element (Stake, 1967; Crowther and Gibson, 1990) which exists in qualitative analysis helps the researcher go beyond initial preconceptions, allowing new realities for study to emerge.

The main body of data were collected through interview, observation and examination of documents, and analysed adopting the qualitative approach described by Miles and Huberman (1984:21ff) incorporating 'data reduction', 'data display' and 'conclusions : drawing/verifying'. This was a cyclical, interactive process, where the three components of data analysis - data collection, data reduction and data display - were interwoven in an ongoing process which operated throughout the life of the study.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this investigation was to establish what it is that leaders *do* in these schools to achieve success and school improvement, despite the prevailing difficulties. The focus of this paper is on the notion of *collaborative leadership*, developed and defined as one which is transformational and encompass distinctive elements of collaboration. As the term 'collaboration' is used in many different ways by many different authors, it needs to be emphasised that the distinctive elements of collaboration presented here are critical to the identification and clarification of what the researcher sees as 'collaboration'. The importance of this cannot be too highly stressed.

Elements of Collaborative Leadership

To move from transformational leadership in general, to collaborative leadership in particular, it was necessary to identify quite specific collaborative elements pertinent to each frame. This was achieved by a synthesis of findings in the review of related literature, and the Bolman and Deal (1991) typology of structural, human resource, political and symbolic frames. Collaborative leadership as immersed in collaborative elements, pertaining to each of the structural, human resource, political and symbolic frames. The collaborative elements are as follows:

a) structural frame

. democratic processes
. leadership density
. direction/vision
. shared goals
. shared responsibility
. roles
. policy processes
. program procedures
. coordination
. planning

. listening
. frank, open and frequent communication;

b) human resource frame

. centrality of teaching and learning
. strong sense of community
. value and regard for professional development
. teachers as curriculum leaders
. parents as co-partners
. teams
. teachers teaching teachers
. professional honesty
. support, praise and trust
. acceptance
. sharing
. continuous learning
. continuous improvement;
. positive student/staff relations
. staff cohesion

c) political frame

. absence of hierarchy
. power-sharing
. open discussion
. consensus
. majority rule
. shared responsibility
. using authority
. using influence
. diffusing conflict
. agreed-upon 'political' behaviour
. participatory decision making procedures
. disagreements not seen as disruptive
. absence of sub-groups
. negotiation
. coalitions
. networks
. frank, open and frequent communication;

d) symbolic frame

. beliefs
. values
. attitudes
. norms of behaviour
. shared meanings
. symbols
. rituals
. ceremonies

The categorisation of these elements has been made in an attempt to rationalise what by very nature is an irrational context, namely the vigorously dynamic milieu of the day-to-day endeavours of a school. Each of the elements is inextricably linked and interrelated to other. However, for the purposes of eliciting their cause and effect relationships, elements have been grouped and classified into the four frames. It is recognised that another researcher

may categorise these elements differently. Many combinations and permutations could legitimately be made. For example, the researcher has included "vision" in the structural frame, where it denotes the clear direction which underlines and steers policy making and implementation, planning, co-ordination and so on, all of which are critical to the inclusive nature of a structurally collaborative culture. On the other hand "vision" might be seen to naturally fall into the classification of the symbolic frame as it so profoundly symbolic in character. For this researcher's purposes, however, the emphasis of the element of vision was to be one of overtly shared purposes which would translate the beliefs of the whole school community into the daily practice of the school. Conceptually vision can be alternatively construed as personal in nature and somewhat covert in make-up. It is with the former characteristics that the notion of vision has been adopted for this thesis and has therefore been included in the structural frame.

Similarly, the element of listening could be interchangeably included in other frames depending on the emphasis required. Listening is an integral part of the participatory decision-making process (structural); listening brings about support or continuous improvement (human resource); listening is critical to open discussion or diffusing conflict (political); and, listening is implicit to a valuing of participation and an attitude of inclusiveness (symbolic). The interrelated nature of the elements in reality makes for a contrived and arbitrary separation. It is the researcher's view that any categorisation is a necessary, but limiting, exercise to uncover the practical specifics of the causal connections between collaborative leadership and school success. The critical factor is that within the composite of the interrelationships of elements, no matter where they are listed, each element is included and is a significant contributor to the whole.

In the absence of a clear definition of the term '**collaborative leadership**', the four perspectives of leadership of Bolman and Deal's four frames, encompassing the characteristics outlined above, - **structural, human resource, political and symbolic** are combined to provide an operational definition, as depicted in Figure 1 below.

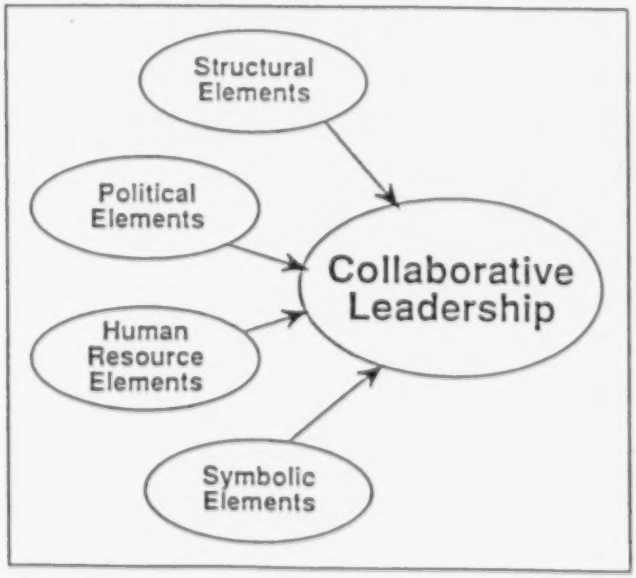

FIGURE 1 : Elements of Collaborative Leadership

In Figure 1, the structural elements of leadership, which contribute to a collaborative leadership, refer to the way in which leaders structure decision-making processes to allow appropriate staff, student and parent participation such that a shared vision and agreed-upon ways of implementing the direction, policies and programs of the school can occur.

Human resource elements refer to the professional development of staff through cooperative sharing of their collective experience. It assumes leaders foster an environment of mutual support, professional acceptance and continuous learning. It is characterised by a focus on the centrality of learning and teaching as the school's primary purpose and high levels of staff and student commitment.

Political elements of collaborative leader behaviour centre around reaching agreement through discussion, negotiation and compromise in a climate of openness. Disagreement and discord are expected in the social, value-laden context of the school. Rather than being seen as hindrances to successful practice, legitimate political processes are incorporated as part of everyday life, facilitating the attainment of shared goals and advancing the educational agenda.

Symbolic elements of collaboration are characterised by deep-seated, often unspoken, shared beliefs, values and attitudes which bring about norms of interaction, friendly informal staff relations and a pervasive camaraderie. Collaborative leaders value diversity, acceptance of differences. Interpersonal openness, and an atmosphere of genuine care and concern for colleagues, personally and professionally,is the norm. Rituals and ceremonies symbolise, and give visible presence to, symbolic perspectives.

Thus, the conceptual framework guiding this research is a combination of Bolman and Deal's four frames and the researcher's identification of collaborative elements which provided the base for an operational definition of collaborative leadership. From this conceptual framework, collaborative leadership and its links to success in urban schools were explored.

FINDINGS

Each interview was taped, with one exception at the subject's request, and later transcribed in detail. Each transcript of each of the subjects' responses was analysed through the four frames by categorising the interview responses into the structural, human resource, political and symbolic elements. Using Miles and Huberman's (1984) interactive model, findings from **each frame** were then generalised across each of the subjects from a particular school, for example Wales Street Primary School, then cross referenced and analysed across the five participating schools. These data were revisited many times, being classified and reclassified until eventually the findings were refined to the distilled form presented below.

However, before presenting the findings, two worked through examples of the way in which primary data were transposed into the succinct findings listed below, are shown. These examples come from the structural frame. Each finding was developed via the same process. In addition, an example is presented of the way in which hypothesised causal links were drawn from the findings.

EXAMPLE NO. 1

Primary data

Extract from 1990 School Council Annual Report - Wales Street Primary School.

> *Wales St is deeply committed to identifying and responding to the educational needs of its students and the community it serves. It does this by maintaining an open-door policy, and encouraging and nurturing all avenues of communication, formal and informal.*

Interview response from Staff Development Officer at Brunswick High School.

> *The nerve centre of the school is the staff meeting held once a week...it is recognised as the decision making body of the school. This [democratic process] makes the chain of command very clear, so that if you want to know something, you know who to go to, and if you think something is not being done right or there's a problem, there's a very clear and commonly accepted way of bringing it to the surface and finding out what's wrong and fixing it, which doesn't in any sense depend on personalities.*

Interview response from the Deputy Principal at Richmond Secondary College.

> *...every second Wednesday we meet to discuss areas of concern in working groups. It's an action process. We identify common areas of concern and common action.*

The above primary data leads to the finding :

> *Leaders in the project schools provide clearly communicated mechanisms/ structures based on democratic principles for whole school planning.*

EXAMPLE NO. 2

Primary data

Interview response from a Senior Staff member at Brunswick High School.

> *In the old style administration people of talent and ability were being passed over...and people started to say 'let's do it [the selection of senior positions] another way...people were very anguished over the idea that senior teachers and principals shouldn't have powers by right; that they should earn those powers and exercise those powers in the name of the people that they were working with.*

Interview response from Preparatory teacher at Wales Street Primary School.

> *With the whole change of philosophy of education, parents realise now that they have a right to be involved. When I first started teaching in the early '70s it was the reverse really. Parents were really just struggling to get involved. I think with that sort of revolution, that responsibility has come with it and parents want to follow it through. I think teachers now realise, some more reluctantly than others, the benefits of sharing that educational responsibility. There are incredible benefits - the whole resource area of varied people, and (speaking as a parent myself) I know that I have got a lot to offer. Many parents can add through their involvement and make their children feel more comfortable - it's not just a sharp division between home and school. If we're talking about integrated education then there should never be a division, it should all just merge. I am very much against that very structured, closed view of institutionalised education....The Principal is a strong advocate. It's clearly through all our policy statements that parents are invited to contribute and be involved.*

Interview response from a Year 12 student at Sydney Road Community School.

> *This school is running because of us and we have to have a say in what's going on. It makes for less tension...you can do something about things; people listen to your point of view.*

The above primary data leads to the finding :

Collaborative leaders support a participatory democratic process for selection of positions of responsibility which are shared across the staff, parents and students of the school.

The preceding narrative reflects the pattern of responses which repeatedly emerged from the interviewees. Comments were unprompted and immediate, expressed with clarity and coherence. The consistency of responses over the nearly 40 hours of interviews leads to a certainty and confirmation of the ensuing generalised findings.

Having elicited findings in each of the four frames, hypothesised causal links were then established between leadership, and school success. The way in which the causal links were developed is exemplified below:

Example:

Primary data

Collaborative leaders support a participatory democratic process for selection of positions of responsibility which are shared across the staff, parents and students of the school.

Elements deduced from primary data:

Democratic decision - making

Open application for positions of responsibility

Collegiality

Respect for colleagues

This has led to the hypothesised structural teacher outcome :

Democratic selection of roles -> equitable, merit-based appointments -> professional respect of leaders -> harmonious staff relationships.

What follows are the findings and the hypothesised causal links for each of the four frames. These have been categorised into student, teacher and organisational outcomes.

STRUCTURAL LEADERSHIP

Leaders in the project schools of this investigation facilitate:

a school climate which directly focuses on the centrality of teaching and learning and can use the structural arrangements of the school to support and enhance individual student achievement;

an open door policy which invites and promotes all people to show expressions of interest in school decision taking;

a participatory democratic process for selection of positions of responsibility which are shared across the staff, parents and students of the school;

clearly communicated mechanisms/structures, based on democratic principles, for whole school planning;

democratic processes at the meeting level, ie., rotation of Chair and minute-taking;

freely shared information to the whole school community;

opportunities for all to take an active part in the formal processes of the school.

Characterised by:

a central focus of using school structures to address and to support students' learning;

commitment, belief and trust in the democratic process;

the knowledge that decisions have been arrived at in a fair and equitable way;

openness and a sense of belonging;

respect and valuing of all members of the school community;

a secure and relaxed atmosphere;

an absence of structural hierarchy and autocratic decision making;

representation of all sectors of the school community;

responsibility not purely linked to seniority;

avoidance of 'ownership' of positions of responsibility;

encouragement of others to take on positions of responsibility, accompanied by strong informal and formal support;

initiation of change from staff, student or parent base rather than principal/executive administration.

How does collaborative leadership effect success in these schools?

It brings about:

clear communication and guidelines;

sound, effective and well-understood decisions;

efficient operating of the school through effective planning;

trust and confidence in the decision making process;

a sense of empowerment;

a strongly committed staff;

high teacher morale;

high level of teacher involvement;

a cohesive, supportive staff;

maximum opportunities for input of staff, student and parent talent/skills; broad-ranging professional development;

a shared workload;

more harmonious relationships - staff/staff staff/student, student/student, staff/parent.

On reflection of the preceding findings, connections emerged between structural leadership, student, teacher and organisational outcomes, and school success. These connections were developed into hypothesised causal links from a relational synthesis of the primary data.

HYPOTHESISED CAUSAL LINKS BETWEEN THE STRUCTURAL LEADERSHIP AND SCHOOL SUCCESS - STUDENT, TEACHER AND ORGANISATIONAL OUTCOMES.

Student Outcomes - Structural Leadership

Student-focused staff meetings -> individualised curriculum -> climate conducive to learning -> development of educational potential;

Student-focused staff meetings -> individualised student pastoral care -> positive student behaviour -> development of educational potential;

Whole staff decision-making -> combined staff action -> consistency of approach -> clear expectations -> positive student behaviour;

Whole staff decision-making -> innovative curriculum -> development of educational potential;

Whole staff decision-making -> clarity of teaching purposes -> climate conducive to learning -> engagement in learning;

Leadership density -> student empowerment -> a climate conducive to learning -> development of educational potential;

Leadership density -> student empowerment -> self determination;

Teacher Outcomes - Structural Leadership

Democratic procedures -> staff cooperation -> cohesive staff -> high morale -> love of teaching;

Democratic meeting procedures -> opportunities for increasing teacher skills -> professional development;

Democratic selection of roles -> equitable, merit-based appointments -> professional respect of leaders -> harmonious staff relationships;

Democratic selection of roles -> equitable, merit-based appointments -> opportunities for broad ranging professional development;

Democratic processes -> power of individual to make change -> high staff morale sense of professional satisfaction.

Organisational Outcomes - Structural Leadership

Vision -> clarity of purpose -> technical culture;

Openness in procedures and processes -> trust and belief in democratic process -> confidence in decisions -> strong involvement and commitment;

Democratic structures -> leadership density -> staff commitment -> institutionalisation of vision;

Democratic processes -> a sense of fairness and equity -> acceptance of majority decision -> cooperation and support by all sectors of the school community;

Democratic processes -> leadership density -> shared decision making -> maximum pool of skills/talents -> well-understood, quality decisions;

Democratic selection of roles -> staff commitment -> effectiveness;

Democratic structures -> constant flow of information -> sound communication;

Democratic organisation -> leadership density -> effective whole school planning and implementation.

Structural Leadership - Summary and Conclusion

The structural frame emphasises the importance of formal roles and relationships. The focus is on organisational direction and goals, roles, policies, procedures and coordination and planning. In a collaborative environment there is a breadth of leadership, an absence of hierarchy and the opportunity for all school community members to contribute to and influence the decision making of the school. Above all, elements of structural leadership such as democratic processes, leadership density, shared goals, shared responsibility, coordination/planning, frank and frequent communication, are an institutionalised part of the day-to-day operations of the school. Structures must serve processes which are seen to be equitable and fair. Leaders in the schools studied have made a shift away from hierarchically - ordered organisational management to a leadership with an emphasis on democratic procedures which are inclusive rather than exclusive, seeing the operation of the school as a collective responsibility of staff, parents and, where appropriate, students. Leaders who establish a collaborative culture through the perceptive management of the structural arrangements of their school play a significant part in contributing to the their school's success.

HUMAN RESOURCE LEADERSHIP

The findings clearly indicate that collaborative leadership, which engenders a school culture fostering and promoting human resource perspectives, brings about effective teaching practice, which in turn results in great gains for students.

Leaders who promote, develop and sustain human resource elements in their schools:

seek out the skills and talents of school community members and match these to roles and responsibilities;

respond to the needs of individuals and accommodate these as appropriate to the overall vision of the roles and responsibilities of the school;

value teaching and learning as the primary and overriding role of the school;

institute staff norms of continuous learning;

establish a formal expectation that staff will help each other;

give approval to an informal, as well as a formal, network of support;

provide strong modelling of professional co-operation and sharing by leaders in the school;

encourage all staff to express their professional individuality and particular fortes in the planning of curriculum;

establish an atmosphere of openness where staff feel comfortable to discuss their uncertainties and seek shared solutions;

do a great deal of informal reinforcing talk;

Assist staff by :

timetabling joint planning times;

making visits possible to other classrooms within their own and others' schools;

giving them opportunities to work together outside their own classroom, e.g. camps/excursions/fetes;

taking responsibility for administrative priorities in the use of space, e.g. one community staffroom/faculty classrooms located adjacent to one another.

Characterised by:

leaders who have a deep - seated belief in the intrinsic value of each individual member of staff;

teachers who share a similar educational philosophy;

teachers who can put aside personality differences to focus on the task at hand, with the understanding that the interests of the students override the idiosyncrasies of individual members of staff;

a working environment of mutual support, professional acceptance and continuous learning;

How does collaborative leadership effect success in these schools?

It brings about:

a cohesive staff group;

a positive mood and high teacher morale;

a formal and informal support network;

a stimulating professional atmosphere;

increased teacher skills;

a sense of shared responsibility for students;

a constantly developing curriculum.

On reflection of the preceding findings, connections emerged between collaborative leadership, student, teacher and organisational outcomes, and school success. These connections were developed into hypothesised causal links from a relational synthesis of the primary data.

HYPOTHESISED CAUSAL LINKS BETWEEN HUMAN RESOURCE LEADERSHIP AND SCHOOL SUCCESS - STUDENT, TEACHER AND ORGANISATIONAL OUTCOMES.

Student Outcomes - Human Resource Leadership

Commonly held educational philosophy -> cooperative planning/evaluation -> consistent monitoring of programs -> a constantly developing curriculum -> engagement in learning;

Organisational fit -> professional satisfaction -> continuous teacher learning -> innovative curriculum -> climate conducive to learning;

Professional honesty -> sharing of successes/failures -> continuous teacher learning -> development of educational potential for students;

Organisational fit -> high morale -> love of teaching -> enthusiastic teachers -> climate conducive to learning -> an engagement in learning;

Task - focused teachers -> teamwork -> cooperative attention to student needs -> student social and academic support -> positive student behaviour;

Student-based school culture -> good student /staff relationships -> positive student behaviour.

Teacher Outcomes - Human Resource Leadership

Organisational fit -> professional confidence -> positive mood/ high morale -> professional development/ continuous learning;

Mutual respect and acceptance -> cooperative teacher learning -> professional stimulation -> on-going school-based professional development;

Organisational fit -> personal/ professional expression -> stimulating practice -> high morale love of teaching;

Formal/ informal support -> staff cohesiveness/camaraderie -> high morale;

Team planning/ support -> shared responsibility/workload -> professional development.

Organisational Outcomes - Human Resource Leadership

Organisational fit -> cooperation/ commitment -> institutionalisation of vision;

Organisational fit -> personal/ professional satisfaction -> high morale -> sound organisational health;

Organisational fit personal/ professional expression -> stimulating practice high morale -> hard work/ commitment;

Organisational fit personal/ professional expression -> stimulating practice -> love of teaching -> sustaining technical culture;

Formal/informal support -> cooperation/commitment -> institutionalisation of vision -> sound organisational health;

Staff-centred administrative arrangements -> opportunities to operate cooperatively -> team approach -> effective management;

Mutual respect and acceptance -> cooperative teacher learning -> sustaining culture of continuous teacher learning.

Human Resource Leadership - Summary and Conclusion

It is clear that specific human resource leadership behaviours are critical to success in developing and sustaining a collaborative culture, and to bringing about success in schools. Underpinning this leadership behaviour is the belief of school leaders that an organisation's most vital resource is the talent, skill and energy of its individual members. Collaborative leaders go out of their way to celebrate and promote this. In schools, or sections of a school, where collaborative leadership is an integral part of school routine, mutual professional respect and co-operative sharing were evident, and a powerfulness was brought to the professional activity in that school which bore direct and significant results for its students. Effective leadership acknowledges the fact schools are socially constructed; they are congregations of people where an interdependence exists between the school as an organisation and its individual members. Organisations need professional experience, ideas and commitment; people need satisfying work, an income and social and personal expression. Good leadership is sensitive to this interdependence, taking active steps to meet the professional and personal needs of staff, and, at the same time, achieving school success.

POLITICAL LEADERSHIP

What is it that leaders do, via political processes, to promote, develop and sustain collaborative cultures in inner city schools. Politically astute, collaborative leaders :

see political processes as part of everyday school life;

foster active participation by all sections of the school community in the decision making processes;

promote open forums, where points of view are defended publicly, avoiding negative manipulation of the decision making process;

reach agreement through consensus wherever possible;

vote on decisions that cannot be reached by consensus;

exert positive influence in an informal way by lobbying or outcomes which will advance the educational agenda;

ensure all information is accessible to all.

Characterised by :

an openness and honesty in presenting points of view;

showing respect for, and attention to, people's points of view;

a sharing of power;

a preparedness to accept decisions made by majority rule;

a satisfaction that the system is fair;

How does collaborative leadership effect success in these schools?

It brings about:

well thought through decisions;

a stronger commitment by staff, student and parents to the implementation of decisions;

a sense of trust;

an advancing of the educational agenda;

On reflection of the preceding findings, connections emerged between collaborative leadership, student, teacher and organisational outcomes, and school success within each frame. These connections were developed into hypothesised causal links from a relational synthesis of the primary data.

HYPOTHESISED CAUSAL LINKS BETWEEN POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND SCHOOL SUCCESS - STUDENT, TEACHER AND ORGANISATIONAL OUTCOMES.

Student Outcomes - Political Leadership

Promotion of democratic processes -> wide representation sharing of power-> a sense of empowerment -> positive behaviour;

Promotion of democratic processes -> wide representation -> sharing of power -> participation in, and experience of, the democratic process;

Promotion of democratic processes -> wide representation -> leadership responsibility;

Promotion of democratic processes -> opportunities to express personal opinions -> personal growth;

Promotion of democratic processes -> opportunities to share the ideas of others -> development of cooperative learning skills;

Open, honest communication -> respect for, and valuing of, others' point of view -> sharing of ideas -> shared problem-solving -> innovation in the curriculum;

Agreed-upon 'political' behaviour -> creation of coalitions based on issues (rather than personalities) -> positive political influence -> harmonious learning environment.

Teacher Outcomes - Political Leadership

Agreed-upon 'political' behaviour -> disagreements not seen as disruptive -> diffusion of conflict -> harmonious working relationships;

Agreed-upon 'political' behaviour -> disagreements not seen as disruptive -> diffusion of conflict -> staff cohesion -> high morale -> staff commitment/enthusiasm;

Promotion of democratic processes -> wide representation -> sharing of authority -> shared responsibility -> professional satisfaction;

Promotion of democratic processes -> wide representation -> opportunities to express opinions -> harmonious working atmosphere;

Fair and equitable decision-making -> agreement via consensus/vote -> acceptance of decisions -> lack of dissension -> harmony;

Fair and equitable decision-making -> agreement via consensus/vote -> acceptance of decisions -> staff cohesion -> high morale/ job satisfaction;

Open, honest communication -> respect for, and valuing of, others' point of view -> sharing of ideas -> informed decisions -> professional stimulation;

Information accessible to all -> trust in the processes -> harmony -> cohesive staff;

Accessibility of information/forums -> opportunity for negotiation/ compromise -> sense of trust -> satisfaction that the system is fair -> high morale/professional satisfaction.

Organisational Outcomes - Political Leadership

Acceptance of politics as routine -> problems/conflict seen as inevitable -> development of formal political processes -> sense of trust good organisational health;

Awareness of the informal political network -> opportunity for diffusion of conflict -> good organisational health;

Promotion of democratic processes -> wide representation -> well thought through decisions;

Promotion of democratic processes -> wide representation -> strong communication;

Promotion of democratic processes -> wide representation -> greater coordination / planning;

Fair and equitable decision-making -> acceptance of decisions -> strong commitment to the implementation of decisions;

Creation of open forums for discussion -> public defence of views -> open, honest communication -> avoidance of self-interest -> satisfaction that the system is fair -> good organisational health;

Political Leadership - Summary and Conclusion

Far from being negative or destructive in the organisation, political elements of collaborative leadership in this study emerge as contributing to sound organisational health and an advancing of the educational agenda. Leaders in the participating schools took active steps to ensure an absence of hierarchy, empowerment of teachers, students and parents, open and frank discussion and a striving for consensus. Political skills of lobbying,

negotiation, positive use of authority and the diffusion of conflict, led to a positive influence and successful student, teacher and organisational outcomes. Political processes were seen as part of everyday school life and leaders fostered an active participation by members of the school community in the decision-making process. As a result, decisions were well thought through, a sense of trust was engendered, and commitment of staff, students and parents to the implementation of decisions was strong.

SYMBOLIC LEADERSHIP

Leaders in the project schools were the guardians and proponents of the following identified shared beliefs and values :

Beliefs

a belief that disadvantaged children should have full educational opportunities and that school arrangements can make this happen;

a belief in the democratic process.

Values

an intrinsic valuing of each individual; student or staff member;

valuing of diversity;

a valuing of community;

a valuing of participation;

How does collaborative leadership effect success in these schools?

It brings about the institutionalisation of the following attitudes and norms:

Attitudes

acceptance of differences;

caring and respect;

egalitarianism;

inclusiveness;

self-worth;

Norms of:

interaction;

cooperative/team approach;

mutual support;

staff, student and parent cohesion;

interpersonal openness;

sharing;

commitment/enthusiasm.

Symbols, Rituals and Ceremonies

Leaders articulated the beliefs and values of the school through symbols, rituals and ceremonies.

On reflection of the preceding findings, connections emerged between collaborative leadership, student, teacher and organisational outcomes, and school success. These connections were developed into hypothesised causal links from a relational synthesis of the primary data.

HYPOTHESISED CAUSAL LINKS BETWEEN SYMBOLIC LEADERSHIP AND SCHOOL SUCCESS - STUDENT, TEACHER AND ORGANISATIONAL OUTCOMES.

Student Outcomes - Symbolic Leadership

a belief that disadvantaged children should have full educational opportunities -> special school arrangements -> social welfare support programs -> development for educational potential;

an attitude of caring and respect by staff -> modelling of norms of behaviour -> an attitude of caring and respect in students;

an attitude of acceptance of differences -> modelling of norms of behaviour -> a student attitude of acceptance of differences;

a belief in the intrinsic value of each individual student -> self-worth -> climate conducive to learning -> development of student potential;

valuing of diversity -> acceptance of differences -> an absence of racial tension -> climate conducive to learning;

value of interpersonal openness -> egalitarian approach by staff -> mutual acceptance and respect -> climate conducive to learning -> engagement in learning;

Teacher Outcomes - Symbolic Leadership

a shared belief that disadvantaged children should have full educational opportunities -> combined staff action -> high staff morale / job satisfaction;

a belief in the intrinsic value of each individual member of staff -> mutual support and respect -> high morale -> love of teaching;

valuing of diversity -> acceptance of differences -> expressing of individuality -> satisfaction of needs;

value of interpersonal openness -> staff interaction -> reinforcement of beliefs and values -> sustaining of a collaborative staff culture.

valuing of diversity -> acceptance of differences -> an absence of racial tension -> harmonious working relationships;

Organisational Outcomes - Symbolic Leadership

a belief that disadvantaged children should have full educational opportunities -> extensive educational support -> cooperative team approach -> institutionalisation of vision ;

an attitude of caring and respect by staff -> modelling of norms of behaviour -> an attitude of caring and respect in whole school community -> institutionalisation of values and beliefs -> sustaining of collaborative culture;

an attitude of caring and respect by staff -> modelling of norms of behaviour -> an attitude of caring and respect in whole school community;

a belief that disadvantaged children should have full educational opportunities -> special school arrangements -> social welfare support programs -> sound organisational health;

value of interpersonal openness -> egalitarian approach by staff -> mutual acceptance and respect -> cohesive staff/ student/parent community;

value of interpersonal openness -> interaction / socialising -> reinforcement of shared beliefs/values -> institutionalisation of vision.

Symbols/rituals/ceremonies -> reinforcement of shared beliefs/values -> institutionalisation of vision.

Symbolic Leadership - Summary and Conclusion

The symbolic frame contains the beliefs, values and attitudes of leaders, denoting and directing the fundamental purposes and processes of the school. Through these beliefs values and attitudes leaders established structures for the management and organisation of the school, treated people in certain ways, and saw politics as routine. In a collaborative school culture leaders established democratic decision making processes, treated people collegially, and sought consensus as a priority. Norms of interaction, cooperation and teamwork, mutual support, interpersonal openness and commitment resulted and the primary purposes of the school were achieved. Symbols, rituals and ceremonies bore formal representation of the school's ideology. Critical to success was the interplay of the symbolic with the structural, human resource and political frames. In the case of the five inner city schools in this study, beliefs and values centred around a valuing of diversity, an acceptance of the individual, a strong sense of participation and community and a commitment by staff to fully support students from disadvantaged backgrounds, socially and academically, so that the educational potential of each child could be maximised, and their life choices optimised.

SYNTHESIS AND DISCUSSION

A synthesis of hypothesised causal links was taken *outside* the four frames. Each hypothesised causal link was individually sorted, disregarding the frames, into several emerging but distinct patterns. A distillation of the causal links was thus effected, bringing valuable insights as to what it is that constitutes the *heart* of the collaborative milieu, and what it is in *essence* that brings about school success. Four dominant factors (outside the Bolman and Deal typology) were apparent. They are as follows:

development of the educational potential of students

professional development of teachers

good organisational health

institutionalisation of vision

These four critical factors form a synthesis of the sum and substance of the hypothesised causal links and are summarised below.

Development of the educational potential of students:

The developing of educational potential for students centres around three core factors - positive student behaviour, a climate conducive to learning and an innovative curriculum designed to meet student needs. Positive behaviour includes caring and respect for fellow students, a student attitude of acceptance of differences and a developing of cooperative learning skills such as listening to and respecting the opinions of others. These attitudes and skills have direct implications for positive discipline in the school, where, together with a consistency of expectations from staff, cooperation is encouraged and unacceptable behaviour which might disrupt or inhibit learning is minimised. Moreover, empowerment of students brings opportunities for personal growth and leadership responsibility, as well as for choice in the curriculum, which in turn facilitate engagement in learning.

Closely aligned to positive student behaviour is the development of a climate conducive to learning, where open and approachable relationships between staff and students lead to mutual acceptance and respect. A belief in the intrinsic value of each student produces a feeling of self-worth, a positive approach to learning and a development of educational potential. As well special school arrangements such as social welfare and support programs advance the academic learning environment for students in urban schools.

An innovative curriculum which is constantly developing, clarity of teaching purposes, cooperative curriculum planning and evaluation, contribute to meeting the individual needs of students. Student-focused staff meetings play an important role in catering for students whether it be with regard to individualised pastoral care or individualised curriculum.

Thus, positive student behaviour, a climate conducive to learning and an innovative curriculum designed to meet student needs, all play a critical role in developing the educational potential of urban students.

Professional development of teachers:

Organisational fit, continuous teacher learning, and professional satisfaction/love of teaching have direct impact on the professional development of teachers. Organisational fit allows for personal and professional expression which brings about professional stimulation and satisfaction. In addition, a belief in the intrinsic value of each individual staff member leads to mutual support and respect. This flows on to continuous teacher learning which is achieved through teacher empowerment, shared responsibility, cooperative planning and the sharing of ideas. Both organisational fit and continuous teacher learning jointly lead to professional satisfaction and a love of teaching. This, in conjunction with democratic, merit-based appointments, enhances the professional development of teachers.

Good organisational health:

Good organisational health is generated via a technical culture, harmonious relationships and effective management. Technical culture refers to the organisational focus of teaching and

learning as the school's raison d'etre, bringing clarity of purpose and a clear direction to the operation of the school. Harmonious relationships across the school community cultivate a cordial, congenial and supportive working environment for students, staff and school community members, producing cohesion and high morale. Effective management leads to well-understood, quality decisions, strong communication, and whole school coordination and planning. Together, a technical culture, harmonious relationships and effective management provide the key ingredients in creating good organisational health.

Institutionalisation of vision:

Shared beliefs, leadership density, and commitment, cooperation and support are pivotal to the institutionalisation of vision. Beliefs which are shared, bring a common purpose and underpinning of the daily practices of the school. Leadership density with its breadth of leadership and wide representation enables a collective reinforcing of the guiding values and attitudes of the school. When beliefs are shared amongst the members of the school community, and when a density of leadership is present, then the vision of the school is poised to become institutionalised. Significantly however, for institutionalisation of vision to occur, cooperation, support and commitment must accompany shared beliefs and leadership density.

In the process of isolating these four fundamental understandings from the aggregated hypothesised causal connections, it becomes clear that each of the four is intimately related to each other and the connections and cross connections between them appear limitless. For example, harmonious relationships are interrelated to positive student behaviour, and to cooperation and support, and to professional satisfaction; innovation in the curriculum is interdependent with continuous teacher learning and a technical culture; and high morale is entwined with a climate conducive to learning and to cooperation and commitment. What is of significance here is that the four demonstrable outcomes which generate a collaborative culture are **inextricably linked and dependent** on each other. It could be said, therefore, that where **all** four outcomes are present and operate simultaneously, a fully functioning collaborative culture has been established. This contributes to making a collaborative culture difficult to achieve. Nonetheless, the synthesis of the hypothesised causal linkages brings a clear message for school leaders, namely, four critical factors depict school success - development of educational potential, professional development of teachers, good organisational health and the institutionalisation of vision.

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